

Rugby Phoenix Volleyball Club

<http://rugbyphoenixvolleyballclub.wordpress.com>

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION & SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Rugby Phoenix Volleyball Club does not wish to prevent communication between adults and young people and understands that communication is important in a young person's development and membership of a team, club or organisation. Changes in technology have created more opportunity for interaction with young people and Rugby Phoenix Volleyball Club is committed to keeping up to date with these technologies and advising on best practice.

Electronic Communication

The term electronic communication includes contact with young people via email, text message, social networking sites and instant messaging systems.

Technology

As technology develops, the internet and its range of services can be accessed through various devices including mobile phones, computers, games consoles and other devices. Although the internet has many positive uses, it also provides the possibility for misuse such as distribution of indecent images of young people, grooming young people via social networking sites, chat rooms and instant messaging systems and, furthermore, is used by young people as a means of bullying their peers.

All adults working with young people in volleyball are asked to adhere to the following good practice guidelines.

Rugby Phoenix will investigate any concern raised regarding individuals who are not adhering to this policy when communicating with young people.

General Principles

- It is inappropriate for adults to communicate on a one-to-one basis with young people:
 - By text message
 - Through social networking sites
 - By email
 - By instant messaging
- All electronic communication by the above methods should include a copy to a third party, e.g. copy to the relevant Safeguarding Officer and/or parent.
- Adults should limit all electronic communication to volleyball related matters only.
- It is advised to send a group message rather than individual messages to one young person.
- Parental consent is required for communication between the adult and young person. This permission can be given as part of the club membership form at the start of the season.

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- The publishing of a photograph or video on a social networking site is governed by the same requirements as any other media outlet – see Rugby Phoenix Volleyball Club Photographic & Recorded Images Policy.
- All staff, volunteers, parents and members should behave responsibly and respectfully when online or texting. They should not post or discuss unfavourable comments about coaches, players, any helper or volunteer, parent or club.
- Electronic communication should never be used as a medium by which to abuse or criticise Volleyball England, its members, or clubs and to do so would be in breach of Volleyball England codes of conduct and therefore subject to disciplinary action.

Text Messages

Text messages are not the preferred method of communication between adults and young people. However, where they are used they should be group (bundled) messages and should always be copied to the relevant Safeguarding Officer and/or parent.

Emails

Emails are a positive and simple method of communication between adults and young people. Group emails are preferred, although in the case of an email to an individual young person, a copy must be sent to the relevant Safeguarding Officer and/or parent.

Social Networking

- Volleyball England members in a position of trust and/or responsibility should not have young people as friends/fans/followers on personal social networking sites when the primary reason for their relationship is volleyball.
- Clubs using social networking sites must only accept members of the clubs as their friends/fans/followers or contacts on the social networking site/page/group. This must be stated on the site and must be set up for that reason. It is important the site's privacy settings are set ensuring that an outside adult may not be able to make contact with a young person by first gaining access via the club social networking site.
- Young members should be encouraged to set their privacy settings and not accept requests either from people unknown to them or from adults within volleyball. Likewise, adults should not accept requests from young people involved in volleyball. Moreover, all social networking sites are restricted to people over 13 years of age. This restriction must be adhered to.

Instant Messaging Services

MSN, Yahoo, Google Chat, Facebook, Blackberry Messaging and other instant messaging services should not be used by adults to communicate with young people under any circumstances.

Reporting Guidance

In the event of a young person showing an adult, in a position of responsibility and/or trust within volleyball, a text message, image or email that is considered to be inappropriate for a young person to have, the adult must inform the appropriate Safeguarding Officer.